

Trellis Fund Frequently Asked Questions

1. How might being a Trellis Fund Fellow fit into my academic career?

One of the goals of the Trellis Fund is to engage U.S. graduate students in international projects. It is an excellent opportunity for students to apply what they are studying in the field, while helping to extend cutting edge scientific knowledge and agricultural best practices. Especially for students who have always been interested in international work but not yet had the chance, working on a Trellis Fund project is an ideal opportunity. We've seen PhD students use Trellis projects to add to their research and Master's students could utilize Trellis to inform a thesis or capstone project.

2. When will I be traveling?

Student travel for Trellis Fund projects is intentionally left flexible because we understand that graduate students often have multiple responsibilities. Furthermore, each project is different and will have different timelines. It is the responsibility of the funded organization and the Trellis Fellow to negotiate when would be the best time for them to travel will be. However, the earliest anyone would be able to travel would be after the Trellis Fund Seminar in March 2018. This is typically around Spring Break. Most students end up traveling over the summer, between May-August, but students can travel later as well, as long as the project is completed by December 31, 2018.

3. How long am I expected to be in-country? And can I stay longer?

As part of the fellowship, the Trellis Fund will cover the cost of an approximately 2-week stay in-country. Students who wish to stay and work longer with their organizations are encouraged to do so, but will need to find additional funding.

4. How will I get there?

The Trellis Fund purchases tickets for all Trellis Student Fellows from the airport of their choice to the country of their assignment. While the Trellis Fund makes every effort to accommodate student's preferences, we cannot always meet requests for specific flights, seats or other arrangements. Due to our federal funding, all flights must comply with the Fly America Act. The Trellis Fund does not purchase upgradeable tickets, tickets for any class other than economy or tickets for anyone who is not a Trellis Fellow. Side trips to destinations other than your project country and area may be permitted if the schedule allows. However, all arrangements and costs associated with such trips will be the responsibility of the student.

<http://horticulture.ucdavis.edu>



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5. Where will I stay?

Fellows typically stay at local hotels or guest houses, though some fellows also end up doing homestays with a local family. Lead organizations are expected to assist their Fellows in finding safe, clean, and affordable accommodation during their stay. Upon request, the Trellis Fund team can also help.

6. Will Trellis Fund help me with visas and travel insurance?

While the Trellis Fund Team can assist students, if necessary, with obtaining a visa, it is the student's responsibility to find out what the visa requirements are for the country that they will be visiting. The Trellis Fund will cover the cost of a visa, including if the student needs to use a visa service. All students are expected to have travel insurance, and in many cases students can obtain travel insurance free through their universities. In the case that free university insurance is unavailable, the Trellis Fund will also cover the cost of a travel insurance plan that meets the same level of coverage as the UC Davis Travel Insurance plan. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have coverage, but the Trellis Fund team can also provide assistance when necessary.

7. How will costs be covered while I am in-country?

The cost of modest accommodation and meals for the 2 weeks in-country will be covered by the Trellis Fund on a reimbursement basis. Upon their return, students will need to fill out a reimbursement request form and itemized expense sheet with dates, so they should keep all their receipts. The Trellis Fund can provide blank receipt forms that vendors can fill out in the case that they don't have their own receipts. The lead organization is responsible for all in-country, project-related travel, including airport pick-up and return. Any recreational side-trips will be the student's responsibility to pay for.

8. What safety protocols do you have in place?

All students are required to fill out an Emergency Preparedness Form before they travel and have travel insurance. Vaccines and medications will also be paid for by the Trellis Fund. More specific safety measures and protocols will be covered as part of the Trellis Fund Seminar.

9. Are there any specific language requirements?

All the lead country project teams are proficient in English, and will provide translation services in country, when necessary. While, some projects might express the desire for a student with certain language aptitudes, not knowing this language does not disqualify you. If you do know any language(s) that would be helpful for the project please make sure to highlight these in your application cover letter.

10. What can be counted towards the 100 hours of remote work?

Students are expected to work on their project remotely for a minimum of 100 hours, and this can be broken up in whichever way works best for the student's schedule and project's timeline. Similar to travel, we have tried to make this requirement flexible to fit best into students' schedules, and the only stipulation is that all 100 hours must be completed by December 31, 2018. However, time spent attending the 10-week Trellis Seminar, as well as time spent in-country does not count towards this requirement.

11. What is the Trellis Seminar?

The Trellis Seminar will take place over 10-weeks, from January to March 2018 (January 10-March 14). Each seminar is about 1.5 hours and is designed to cover topic that will help prepare students to successfully carry out their project responsibilities. Some topics include survey design, how to create extension materials, how to develop and facilitate a workshop, project monitoring and evaluation plans, safety and security, and how to incorporate gender into project activities. UC Davis students are expected to attend in person, while students at University of Florida, North Carolina State University, and University of Hawaii at Manoa will video conference in through Zoom. Please contact the Trellis Fund team if you have concerns over your ability to attend this seminar, as it is possible that accommodations can be made for special circumstances.

12. How are fellowship applications reviewed?

Each application will be reviewed by three expert reviewers from within the Horticulture Innovation Lab network and our four partner universities. Applications will be assessed based on how well the student's expertise and experience fit the project's needs, as well as whether this would also be a good opportunity for the student to grow. If you applied for more than one project, each will be reviewed separately. We will match one student per project. Because the competitiveness of each project varies, we encourage you to read the application instructions and project descriptions closely to select the project(s) best suited for your skills and interests.

13. Do I have to be a U.S. citizen to apply?

No, international graduate students who are studying at one of the four eligible universities are also welcome to apply.

14. I am a graduate student at another university or I am an undergrad, can I apply?

The Horticulture Innovation Lab is managed by UC Davis in partnership with three additional universities: NC State, UF, UH Manoa and thus only grad students from those four universities are eligible. In addition, the Trellis Fund is a program that is only open to graduate students at this time.

If you still have questions about this opportunity, please email us at trellisfund@ucdavis.edu.